(c) whether it is also a fact that the private operators have to give 10 per cent of their revenue to Government; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRI S. JAIPAL REDDY): (a) and (b) The Government has permitted Prasar Bharati to increase the number of channels on DD-Direct to fifty in its bouquet. Prasar Bharati is in the process of making necessary arrangements in this regard.

(c) No, Sir.

(d) Does not arise.

Payment for cricket footage

2709. SHRI TARIQ ANWAR: Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that several electronic channels have not paid up for cricket footage to Doordarshan;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor; and

(c) the steps taken in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRI S. JAIPAL REDDY): (a) to (c) Prasar Bharati has informed that notices have been issued to private channels to stop unauthorised usage of cricket footage.

It has further informed that under the Terms and Conditions for use of match footage of the India-Pakistan Cricket series, in the case of any channel utilising the match footage in excess of 30 seconds in news bulletins, Doordarshan will raise bills on the concerned private TV channels after the conclusion of the said series.

Popularity of DD/AIR

2710. SHRI N.R. GOVINDRAJAR: Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state:

(a) whether the popularity and quality of Doordarshan and AIR is declining day by day as compared to private channels despite the fact that 90 per cent of population has access to the National Channels;

(b) whether the decline in popularity of Doordarshan and AIR is attributed to the declining of quality of programmes; and

(c) if so, the concrete steps taken by Government to make Doordarshan and AIR popular once again?

THE MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRI S. JAIPAL REDDY): (a) to (c) Prasar Bharati has informed that in order to fulfil the mandate of the Public Service Broadcaster to inform, educate and entertain the public, Prasar Bharati has been constantly aiming for excellence both in terms of content and quality. Doordarshan constantly reviews the quality of serials/programmes telecast on its various channels and makes efforts to further improve the contents and technical quality/ transmission. The studios and equipment are continuously being modernized to improve technical quality of programmes.

The continuous increase in the number of Private Channels and introduction of FM Radio in private sector have cut into the popularity of DD &AIR. This unavoidable consequence cannot simplistically be attributed to decline in the quality of programmes.

Allotment of equity shares

2711. SHRI ABANI ROY: Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have received a proposal from Balaji Telefilms Ltd. for preferential allotment of equity shares/warrants to M/s Asian Broadcasting Ltd. for consideration by FIPB;

(b) whether the proposal of Balaji was in accordance with the existing FDI norms/guidelines;

(c) if so, the reasons for restricting the equity share of M/s Asian Broadcasting Ltd. or their affiliate group (s) below 25.99 per cent when the FDI guidelines permits equity upto 100 percent; and